

CROSBY RAVENSWORTH C of E (Aided) SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Crosby Ravensworth, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3JJ

School telephone: 01931 715265

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GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Friday, 12 February 2021, 1400 via Teams

Board members:

Linda White	(Chair)	(LW)	Foundation Governor
Debbie McCall	(Vice Chair)	(DMcC)	Foundation Governor
Tom Cripps	-	(TC)	Foundation Governor
Tom Hollis	-	(TH)	Parent Governor
Liz Lindwall	-	(LL)	Foundation Governor
Susan Pattinson	-	(SP)	Staff Governor
Duncan Priestley	-	(DP)	Staff Governor, ex officio

Apologies:

Stewart Fyfe	-	(SF)	Church Governor, ex officio
Neil Hughes	-	(NH)	Local Authority Governor

and later, after technical difficulties:

John Walton	-	(JW)	Foundation Governor
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Others attending:

Chloe Randall	(Clerk)	(CR)
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MINUTES

1 PRAYERS

DMcC led the meeting in prayer, which was sadly unintelligible due to software problems. Amen. (DMcC: "It was fine on Wednesday when we had a test run.")

LW took the chance to remind everyone that although these meetings were all very easy and friendly and there is a great deal of interaction via e-mails, it is easy to forget that everything we are doing as Governors is confidential and must be treated as such. Any software difficulties, however amusing, could not be shared via social media!

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 **Apologies:** LW explained that apologies had been received from:

- Neil Hughes (struggling with Zoom/Team meetings, but he had been invited to send in questions)
- Stewart Fyfe (unavailable on Fridays, but likewise had been invited to send in questions and challenges)

JW tried very hard to join the meeting via Teams (and TH left the meeting for a short while to try to assist him), but was unable to join and perforce also had to send his apologies.

ACTION:	DP to ask the school's IT Technician to assist JW	DP	
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2.2 Minutes of earlier meetings:

- .1 **14 October 2020:** the Board agreed that Version 4 should be adopted as the formal record of the meeting.
- .2 **12 January 2021:** the Board agreed that Version 2 should be adopted as the formal record of the meeting.

2.3 Declarations of interests: all those present were invited to update their declarations of interest verbally:

- .1 DP asked Governors to note that he was joining a Governor team at his daughter's primary school from March onwards
- .2 SP mentioned that her husband Paul was undertaking electric works at Crosby Ravensworth School as a paid contractor

2.4 Matters arising (not included elsewhere on the agenda): none were raised.

2.5 Committee reports:

2.5.1 Resources Committee, 25 January 2021:

2.5.1.1 Policies: the Board was asked to note and/or ratify the following policies presented by the Resources Committee:

- .1 Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs
- .2 Asbestos Management Plan
- .3 Maternity, Adoption, Paternity, Parental and Shared Parental Leave
- .4 Newly Qualified Teachers Induction
- .5 Capability of Staff
- .6 Site Secure Risk Assessment
- .7 School Financial Value Statement (LW asked for it to be noted that this was circulated by e-mail and ratified, as it had needed to be signed and submitted prior to the board meeting date)
- .8 Governors' Allowances
- .9 Complaints Procedure

All were noted by the Board and their adoption confirmed.

2.5.1.2 Governors' Budget Summary, January 2021:

- 2.5.1.2 .1 TC had circulated minutes of the Resources Committee before the meeting, and said that there was not a huge amount to say other than that financially this year the school seems to be in pretty good order. TC said he was very pleased with the way Pauline Cleasby (School Business Manager) is presenting the figures, which TC said he now just about understood. The most recent statement is largely what was expected: currently we have a relatively big surplus but this will be reduced when the playground improvements are paid for. The main thing is to note that this year is pretty 'odd' – we are not getting income from school trips, etc, but equally we are not spending money on these. Everything looks fine at the moment, but nothing can be guaranteed in these unusual circumstances.
- 2.5.1.2 .2 TC said he wondered whether the monthly budget statements should be circulated to every Governor, or whether a different frequency would be appropriate. DP suggested it would do no harm to circulate them in the interests of open accountability for any Governor to question if they wanted to. TC said that could easily be done, but it would not reduce the expectation that

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the Resources Committee would pay the most attention to the figures, as they are on the ones required to take responsibility. LW mentioned that previously David Nattrass had invited queries, with everyone being copied in on the answers – which provided good information all round and it would be useful to continue. TC said that had been when the reports were only circulated termly but he was happy to continue the practice with monthly circulations if that is what Governors would like. DP and LW confirmed that they thought this would be very helpful.

2.5.1.2 .3 DP said he had just learnt that this year the County would not be enforcing the rule which limited rollover of unspent budget to 8%, which was good news as it meant any surplus could be rolled forward.

2.5.1.3 TC said that the updated Policy and Procedure Schedule is proving to be a big help; particularly as Procedures are only presented for acceptance rather than in-depth review, which was making the work of the Committee much more straightforward.

2.5.1.4 TC invited further questions – there were none.

2.5.2 **Pupil Progress, 26 January 2021:**

2.5.2.1 **Policies:** the Board was asked to note and/or ratify the following policies presented by the Resources Committee:

.1 Special Educational Needs and Disability

.2 Appendix to above: Recording SEND on the pupil matrix

All were noted by the Board and the adoption confirmed. SP noted that there were two further policies due for review, but these needed considerable extra work and would be brought forward in due course.

2.5.2.2 LL said she felt there was nothing further to be added to the minutes, which had already been circulated. SP said that gaps from the previous lockdown are being closed, with a lot of hard work. SP asked for it to be minuted that children and parents had really engaged in home learning and had tried to do as much as they possibly could. Although there would be gaps when the children returned to school, these would hopefully not be huge.

2.5.2.3 LW mentioned that when she had written to thank parents for feedback they had sent to Ofsted, the parents had responded to say that they thought Crosby Ravensworth's provision was excellent in comparison with many schools. They were very pleased with the progress their children were making, describing it as "coming on in leaps and bounds" in spite of two lockdowns and they were delighted to be able to thank the school for its efforts.

3 MAIN BUSINESS

3.1 Head Teacher's Report:

3.1.1 LW said that DP had referred to an appendix at the end of his report, which she had not been able to find. DP said he would explain when he came to that part of the report.

3.1.2 DP as ever, said he would not be going through the report verbatim, but would touch briefly on each subheading so that Governors could jump in and ask questions.

- 3.1.3 **Introduction:** DP said that this second period of school closure had revealed what a vital member of the team Les Cooper is as IT Technician – probably no other school has such a good Technician, or one who cares enough to give out his own telephone number to parents and is always available to give help.
- 3.1.4 **Assessment:** DP said that when the children came back in school assessments had been used to find out where children were, and then the teaching staff did what could be done to plug those gaps by making bespoke interventions. We assessed on a six weekly basis, and we think we made good improvements in writing and reading, but a very slight dip in maths. DP said that the results suggested we had been making good progress back in the Autumn term. TH **challenged** the numbers in the report, and DP gave a full explanation to demonstrate why the figures indicated the points he had made above. DP said that normally the next assessment point would be just before Easter, and if the school is open then, he would advocate that we do take the next assessment then.
- 3.1.5 **Number on roll:** DP reported a development today, which confirmed the projections for two new pupils. These are cousins of another family who recently joined the school, and will be augmenting Year 5 and Year 1 (or possibly Reception), which is excellent.
- 3.1.6 **Attendance:** DP said he believed ‘attendance’ had been very good during lockdown. A register is taken every week to identify how many children had been attending every day, and the result was very high – 95%. SP concurred with this figure.
- 3.1.7 **Curriculum:**
- .1 Progress had been made this week on the two policies which the Pupil Progress Committee still had to review: Religious Education and Acts of Worship. An experienced Religious Education Co-ordinator in a small school near Wigton had been introduced, and staff have had the benefit of a Zoom meeting and documents to help revise these policies.
 - .2 IT spending – the school had been successful in a bid for a grant from the Local Authority for £1,500 to support home learning. LW **challenged** DP to confirm whether this was linked with Pupil Premium IT expenditure, or if this was separate? DP explained that Pupil Premium was separate and special, but that equipment would be ordered at the same time as the order for the £1,500 equipment funded by the Local Authority.
- 3.1.8 **Leadership and management:** DP had spent an hour in a Zoom conversation with David Salmon from the Local Authority, and had included as an Appendix to his report a summary statement of the school’s current strengths and areas for improvement. DP felt that the pupils’ behaviour in school and attitudes to learning are outstanding which makes a huge difference to the school. TC **challenged** DP to who exactly is David Salmond – his role and authority? DP said he was the Local Authority General Adviser for the area, part of the Learning Improvement Service which supports and challenges Headteachers across the county in primary and secondary schools. David Salmond has been assigned to the cluster of 12 schools in Eden, plus various other clusters in the

county. This is the channel through which the Local Authority targets support when it is specifically needed, and Crosby Ravensworth is currently only receiving a modicum of attention.

- 3.1.9 **Pupil Premium:** LW **challenged** DP to explain why Pupil Premium funds were being used to provide a laptop to a child, as she understood that the school was supposed to be loaning laptops anyway. DP said that although the child for whom Pupil Premium was allocated was currently using a loaned laptop, this would be returned to the school when lockdown is over. Having discussed the pupil's needs with the mother and the extent to which the child had access to IT equipment at home, we agreed that it would be good use of Pupil Premium funds to provide the child with a laptop for permanent use by the pupil concerned. LW thanked DP, and explained that she had been anxious to understand the difference.

3.1.10 **Health and Safety:**

- .1 DP confirmed that the school is going to be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays after half term to provide schooling for three children of keyworkers. He had completed the risk assessments (which will be sent out to Governors and staff) and were now updated to include lateral flow tests (staff needing to take these twice per week). When the school is fully open, every member of staff will be taking tests twice a week. There had been a lot of information to pass on to staff with instructional videos, arrangements, etc, and tests were currently being put out in school for staff to pick up. TH **challenged** DP to explain if staff had time to do their jobs, with all this online work for home; two staff coming in to school to work for three children. Have they enough time to be able to keep up? DP said it is something we have to do, and listen very carefully to the feedback. DP said he would be in on Thursday and Jane Corrie on Tuesday, with the Teaching Assistant on both days and the lunch time supervisor. When a family is entitled to ask to come back into school, then the school has to remind the family that if at all possible they should remain at home but if they continue to request the place, the school has to provide it one way or another. Crosby Ravensworth is better off than most schools as the request is currently only for a couple of days a week.
- .2 DP also said that the plans to extend the canopy outside Class 1 were all set to start in mid-March. He had forwarded the Health and Safety plans for this work to Kym Allen for snagging because it was quite a difficult document for a lay person to understand with five or six attachments to be checked.

- 3.1.11 **Safeguarding:** as JW (the Safeguarding Governor) had not been able to join the meeting, LW asked if the safeguarding issue mentioned in DP's report had been dealt with? DP said that in the particular circumstances of this incident there is nothing he could say to the meeting; it is an on-going issue which is being supported appropriately in school. JW is aware of this as much as any other Governor; it is not something which it would be appropriate for a Safeguarding Governor to become deeply involved in. LW said thank you.

- 3.2 **Self Evaluation Report:** not updated due to the pandemic.

3.3 **School Development Plan:** not updated due to the pandemic.

3.4 **Monitoring and Evaluation Visits:** LW said she had thought this was also something that could not be done, but DP had suggested that anyone who has been allocated a subject could have a one-to-one Zoom meeting with subject co-ordinators to discuss how it was developing. DP felt that this would be appropriate, otherwise Governors could be accused of failing to properly govern the school. LW said that she had held back because she thought this might have been 'one thing too much' to pile on to teachers. DP said he appreciated that point of view, but wondered if that is a question which could be discussed with other Chairs? LW said that currently the National Governors' Association are saying "support teachers, look after their welfare, but don't pester them."

Following the meeting, LW contacted other Chairs, with the following response: *"like us, they are using Zoom and Teams to keep in touch with staff. They are monitoring welfare and home schooling in general, rather than specific subjects. They too plan to gently return to subject monitoring with the reopening of schools."*

3.5 **Policies:**

DP presented the following policies for noting/ratification by the Governing Body:

.1 **Local Authority policies:** although the board formally adopts ten policies supplied by the Local Authority each year, these are included in the review schedule so that they are regularly examined at some point:

.1 Work Life Balance

.2 Time Off Work

.3 Capability of Staff

.2 Well-being Management Policy

.3 Freedom of Information Scheme

.4 Missing Child Procedures

.5 Intimate Care

DP said he thought all these were appropriate to be adopted, and the Governors all agreed. The Board unanimously agreed that the above list of policies were ratified.

3.6 **Policy Review Schedule Update:**

3.6.1 DP said that he felt the new arrangements would be a strength going forward. The Committee Chairs and the Chair of Governors were the ones who had to really keep their fingers on the pulse, and the Clerk is the key to policies being loaded to the website as the current and latest version. The two new documents seem to be working but will continue to evolve as the entire system as brought up to date.

3.6.2 DMcC asked why there were two documents on the website? DP explained that the Policy Schedule was the full explanation of every policy (in alphabetical order by Committee) which was needed with all the relevant information required. The Policy Planner sets them out in summary form in date order for review. It is the quick 'ready reckoner' of what has to be done each month. DP said he had also used this in the run-up to the meeting to summarise what was being done.

3.7 **Staff Welfare, Standards and Morale (standing item):** LW asked the two staff present to comment on behalf of the whole team. SP said home-schooling is not exactly a barrel of laughs – she was struggling more with her own children than with the Crosby work – but

she recognised that it could be a lot worse and was determined to remain positive. Jane Corrie has been fantastic and has taken on board the bulk of the work as she knows SP has children at home. Kate and Lynne have been very supportive as well; DP is working really hard. "We are fine.... but very glad that it is half term." TH, as a parent himself, said he did not think he could express in words how thankful he was that half term was in sight. It is amazing what everyone has achieved but it is very hard to be a parent and a teacher at the same time. DP said he and his wife had also found this. TH said he had no idea how people managed if both parents worked. DP said he was really proud of the parents this lockdown. In the first lockdown, the advice from the Government was fairly basic; this time mandatory directions had been given as to what had to be provided. The Teams platform made a huge difference, and the parents had the determination to sort out the problems they encountered. SP said morale would have been a lot lower if the staff had spent time putting the work online and parents were not engaging, but the fact that everyone is doing it makes it all worthwhile, and the staff are so thankful for the parents. DP said he was cautiously hopeful that the children would not have suffered too much from the school closure because the parents had worked so hard to support them.

- 3.8 **Headteacher's appraisal and pay increase:** the Board noted that DP's pay increase had been ratified by e-mail. LW said "Well deserved, Duncan."

4 STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

4.1 Status of Governing Body:

- 4.1.1 LW said our thanks go to Alan Woodward who had to leave us prematurely. He had provided sterling work both as a Governor and through chairmanship over his time with the Board. She also thanked Liz Lindwall for all the work she has done; her term of chairmanship and her work with the school, which LW hoped would continue after LL's resignation from the Board.
- 4.1.2 LW said these departures leave the Governing Body in a little bit of a quandary because DMCC is due to reach the end of her term in May, and LW in July. So at the next meeting, very few Governors will be left. LW said she had been attempting to recruit with adverts in the local parish magazines; also on Freegle, and Inspiring Governance (at the request of the Diocese). Three responses had been received, although not local, but Zoom might make it more realistic for Governors to govern from a distance. DMCC is also talking to two people in the village who had expressed interest, and is continuing to discuss possibilities with them.
- 4.1.3 LW asked DMCC if she had thought about continuing her tenure, and she confirmed that she was happy to do so if required – and she was speedily assured that this would be very welcome to the Board. (LW herself had already indicated her willingness to continue if required, similarly welcomed.)
- 4.1.4 LW pointed out that it was very important to be aware that the Pupil Progress Committee was now lacking members and short of a Chair. With the departure of AW and LL, only JW is left with the two staff Governors. JW had earlier expressed concern that he was quite new to this committee and definitely did not want to chair the last meeting. LW said she did not think the Board could wait for new Governors, but needed

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to bolster this committee now. TH said that he would try to get to the meetings, but that he was too short of time to take on the role of Chair. DP said if TH could attend the next meeting that would help to stop the meeting being too incestuous, with a view to looking at new governors in the future. LW said that would be very much appreciated for the next meeting, and she would speak to JW as well.

4.1.5 TC said that at the last webinar he and LW had attended, it had been suggested that a lot of schools had done away with the committee structure. DP said that he thought this had been a reference to the Sub-committees of Committees which had hitherto been a significant feature, particularly in larger schools. He was not aware of any schools with less than two Committees – although it was something that could be explored if anyone wished to take it on. LW said that if the full board had to go through all the detail that, for example, Resources Committee dealt with, it would make for a very long meeting. It was agreed to see what new governors might come forward. TH asked what would happen if no Governors at all were available? The Clerk said that school would have to go to the Local Authority and the Diocese and ask for them to provide candidates – something which has been done before when numbers were getting very low and the school had been unable to recruit new members.

4.1.6 The formality of TH being elected to the Pupil Progress Committee was resolved by DP proposing his appointment, seconded by LW and confirmed by all. It was noted that he was already on Resources Committee, and when new Governors come forward this appointment should be reviewed to relieve the pressure on TH.

4.1.7 **Link Governor vacancies:**

- .1 **On-line Safety:** SP had persuaded JW to take on the role of associated Governor for On-line Safety during the last Pupil Progress Committee, and LW would contact JW to confirm. (Confirmed by telephone.)
- .2 **Special Educational Needs and Disability:** with LL's resignation, this link role becomes vacant, but it was agreed that this could be deferred until new governors come on board and join the Pupil Progress Committee.

4.1.8 **Governing Body Vision and Aims:** LW explained that she had reviewed, updated and circulated this document, and incorporated a suggestion from DP. All present confirmed and accepted the reviewed document.

4.2 **Governors' Action Plan:** LW explained that the original, longer document has now been reduced to a more concise format to reflect the current situation. LW stressed that everyone was welcome to make contributions to this living document as it was collectively owned by the whole Board.

4.3 **Governor Skills Audit:** it was noted that this needs to be updated when more Governors come forward.

4.4 **Link Governor updates:**

- .1 **Church:** SF was absent so no report was given.
- .2 **Health and Safety:** TH said he was trying to catch up with reviewing the

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documents. It would be a lot easier if he could meet up with DMcC and get some guidance. DP asked if DMcC could provide a cycle or calendar to TH to help structure his year. DMcC said Kym Allen has a calendar which she will supply.

The Clerk said that she had asked for last term's Accident Report but had told Pauline not to risk going to school in poor weather (snow). No serious accidents had been reported.

- .3 **Special Educational Needs:** LL said everything had already been said in the Headteacher's report and Pupil Progress minutes. Thanks were due to Heather Lowthian for re-writing the policy; only one child was currently on the register and everything is already covered in the documents already discussed. LW thanked LL for her work in this role.

- .4 **Governor Training and induction:** LW felt that the policy, which was due for review, was fit for purpose but was better left for review until DMcC was in post. LW said JW had done a lot of work on Induction but had not had a new Governor to try it on. DMcC said she had not yet received anything from JW.

DMcC asked if everyone to check their details on the training record on the secure website are up to date and to let her know what would have been useful at induction or any current training needs. DMcC said she was going to put together a pack - both a physical one and online (hopefully).

- .5 **Safeguarding:** JW was not present at the meeting to comment.

- .6 **Online Safety/Personal Social Health Education:** as noted before, JW is taking on this role.

- 4.5 **Governors' newsletter:** LW suggested the next newsletter should be left until school re-opens; new governors have been identified and we have something to say. Agreed.

5 REVIEW OF MEETING

- 5.1 **Any Other Business** – none.

5.2 **Dates of Next Meetings:**

- .1 the date for Pupil Progress to be discussed so that TH can be accommodated. TH cannot guarantee being present on any day other than Friday (when he doesn't work)
- .2 if the Full Board meets on a Friday then it is impossible for SF to attend; but as above, TH cannot guarantee attendance on any day but Friday. DP suggested that the meeting should be planned for Wednesday, 26 May as already agreed, but that if TH finds himself unable to attend on that day, it should be postponed until Friday, 28 May. It was agreed that this was a sensible arrangement, given that TH would at this time be sitting on the two Committees and taking on the Health and Safety role

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Summer Term 2020-2021

Resources Committee

Monday, 10 May 2021, at 1530 hours

Pupil Progress Committee

Friday, 7 May 2021 at 1530 hours (rescheduled)

Full Governing Board

Wednesday, 26 May 2021 at 1530 hours

(Friday, 28 May 2021 at 1530 as back-up)

Feedback from Governors:

Version 1 circulated to LW and DP at 17400 hours, 12 February:

DP: I wondered how you'd minute the prayers! Two typos and PPC rescheduled. Excellent accurate minutes. Thanks Chloe. 1809 hours, 12 February 2021

LW: Excellent Minutes thank you. I have corrected a few typos (highlighted in green) and slightly amended 2.5.2.3. (again in green) to reflect what was written in the email the parent sent to me. 2110 hours, 12 February 2021

Version 3 with DP and LW amendments (predominantly tyographical) circulated to all Governors 2130 hours, 12 February 2021:

Version 4 recirculated to Governors 0532 am, 13 February, with more typos on the amendments amended in the cold light of the morning.....

NH: Thanks Chloe. Delighted to see so many positive comments here and also welcome – cautiously clearly – the prospective re-opening of the school after half-term. Thanks to all who have been working so hard. 0750, 13 February

TC: This is a very accurate minute - congratulations Chloe. 1216, 13 February

DMcC: Thank you Chloe for such rapid publication of the minutes. Then a request for the additional paragraph now included at 4.4.4 which was omitted (it was a shared screen, which the Clerk didn't see as she was typing!) 1240, 13 February

Version 5 has extra paragraph at 4.4.4 at DMcC's request at 1245, 13 February.

Version 6 has additional paragraph at 3.4 from LW, 1611 hours, 10 March 2021.